

CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 2, 2014

The City Council Business and Community Affairs Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 8:35 a.m. in the Municipal Building Multi-Purpose Room located at 201 West Gray on the 2nd day of May, 2014, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT:	Councilmember Castleberry and Chairman Griffith
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Heiple and Williams
OTHERS PRESENT:	Ms. Tessa Breder, Norman Chamber of Commerce Ms. Joy Hampton, <u>The Norman Transcript</u> Mr. Duane Kranz, Leidos Engineering Ms. Aruna Mathuranayagan, Leidos Engineering Mr. Dan Schemm, Director, Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau Mr. Joe Sparks, Owner, Legend's Restaurant Mr. Don Wood, Director, Norman Economic Development Coalition
STAFF PRESENT:	Mr. Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Transportation Traffic Engineer Mr. Scott Sturtz, City Engineer Ms. Karla Chapman, Administrative Technician III

Item 1, being:

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING CONSTRUCTION IMPACT MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE LINDSEY STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

Mr. Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator, said Leidos Engineering will be presenting information and discussing potential measures and programs that could be utilized to help lessen construction impacts on businesses during the upcoming Lindsey Street Improvement Project. In an effort to reduce inconveniences to the traveling public, businesses, and residences in the area a number of elements related to project phasing, construction phasing, use of incentives/disincentives, noise control, and dust control can be implemented as part of the construction contract. The measures can be employed to not only lessen the impact on businesses, customers, residents, and visitors to Lindsey Street, but in the case of construction phasing, can also be utilized by businesses to assist in planning for potential mitigation measures and developing strategies to lessen project impacts ahead of the construction.

Mr. Floyd said businesses, residents, and the traveling public will also be impacted by the construction of the new overpass at Lindsey Street and I-35 that will be taking place simultaneously. He said City Staff, the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB), and project engineers will be engaging in a project to develop and install directional signage designed to assist motorists in finding retail, restaurant, and hospitality locations on both the east and west side of I-35 on Lindsey Street.

Mr. Floyd said Staff will also be discussing the plans for public and business information as part of the construction project that potentially include social media sites dedicated to the construction project, public information strategies, business information strategies, and communication efforts by Public Works Staff engaged in on-site construction management. These projects will be enhanced efforts by Staff to relay information and create dialogue with the public and businesses impacted by the construction.

Helping Businesses During Construction

Ms. Aruna Mathuranayagam, Leidos Engineering, said there has already been a lot of discussion regarding the Lindsey Street Improvement Project; however, today's meeting will focus on businesses and how visitors and patrons can access those businesses for a smoother transition during construction. She said safety will be the primary goal for the driving public, patrons, and construction workers. She said another goal is to maintain one open lane in each direction at all times. She said access to all businesses will also be maintained using temporary driveways, consolidated driveways with temporary signage, and maximized shared construction space for utility and roadway construction tasks. She said there are currently 90 driveways along the Lindsey Street corridor and maintaining access to businesses will be a priority.

Ms. Mathuranayagam said the project will occur in stages with Stage I having already begun with construction of a reinforced concrete drainage box (RCB). She said Stage II will consist of utility relocation and rights-of-way acquisition and Stage III will consist of the actual construction along the corridor including drainage and widening of Lindsey Street and reconstruction of the Imhoff Creek Bridge. She said Leidos Engineering is proposing to place a precast bridge structure over Imhoff Creek instead of pouring a concrete deck to minimize impacts to traffic during construction and shorten construction duration. Councilmember Griffith asked how much quicker the bridge could be reconstructed using the precast structure versus a deck poured with cement and Mr. Duane Kranz, Leidos Engineering, said reconstruction could be up to 50% faster. Councilmember Castleberry asked if that meant two weeks construction could be completed in one week and Mr. Kranz said for the design being proposed, it could possibly be finished in three to five months versus seven to eight months. Councilmember Castleberry asked if the bridge would be out of service during reconstruction and Mr. Kranz said yes. Mr. O'Leary said that is why the City is looking at accelerated methods. Councilmember Castleberry asked if the bridge would be open before the start of OU games days and Mr. Scott Sturtz, Capital Projects Engineer, said this is one of those situations where the City could tell the contractor they must have the bridge open by a certain timeframe to earn incentives. Mr. Sturtz said this is also a good opportunity to do the work in off-peak hours to accelerate construction. Councilmember Griffith asked if the two lane bridge will have bike lanes on each side and Mr. Sturtz said yes, there will be five foot bike lanes and five foot sidewalks as well.

Councilmember Castleberry said he is a property owner on Lindsey Street affected by the closing of the bridge and the property owners would like the bridge to be completed before the first OU game scheduled for September 7th. He is concerned about how long the section will be closed. He asked if the 2015 or 2016 football season or both will be affected and Mr. O'Leary said a little bit of both. Mr. O'Leary said part of the project challenge is phasing all the construction to accommodate football games, holidays, etc. He said, theoretically, the project would be under contract in August 2015, but, in ODOT's world, construction may not actually begin until November so that could save the football season. He believed a lot of the bridge construction was going to take place January 2016 through August 2016, to avoid the football season. Mr. Kranz said a lot will depend on what type of bridge is selected because it is not a given that it will be the precast structure. He said the impact of the right-of-way downstream will be a key factor because there will be a cost for a smaller bridge. Mr. Kranz said the contractor would have to do fewer improvements downstream if a larger bridge is constructed. He said in order to construct a smaller bridge there will have to be more improvements to the drainage channel. Mr. Sturtz explained the bridge will be shorter, 60 feet versus 120 feet, not narrower as the width is constant. Councilmember Griffith asked if the length of the bridge is still a variable and Mr. Sturtz said yes. Mr. Sturtz said the narrowness or width of the stream up and down the channel can cause different effects at the bridge so the City is looking at the bridge and streams as a system, not just a bridge and are currently weighing those components to come up with the best alternative. Councilmember Castleberry asked if there are unique features because the bridge is in the flood plain and Mr. Sturtz said absolutely. Mr. O'Leary said the City cannot raise the flood elevation nor can the City violate its own flood plain regulations.

Councilmember Castleberry asked if there have been any thoughts to using Ed Noble Parkway or North Base as a park and ride scenario on game days and Mr. O'Leary said that is one of the options being considered if the construction extends into football season.

Helping Businesses During Construction, continued:

Ms. Mathuranayagam highlighted the four construction phases as follows:

- Phase 1: Build temporary pavement to the south - move traffic to the temporary section
- Phase 2: Building RCB and Lindsey Street to the north – move traffic to the newly built section
- Phase 3: Build Lindsey Street to the south
- Phase 4: Build Lindsey Street median section

Ms. Mathuranayagam highlighted incentives and disincentives (I/D) for the project. She said I/D encourages the contractor to use innovative methods for construction. She said incentives could total up to a half million dollars and a large disincentive could be as high as \$10,000 per day. She said incentives include Cost Plus Time Bidding, which allows the City to request specific portions of Lindsey Street to be completed within a specific number of days. She said there are always unforeseen circumstances during construction such as severe weather, University of Oklahoma (OU) game days, etc., so special I/D's have been included in the contract for unforeseen circumstances. Councilmember Castleberry said many businesses are concerned about access around Thanksgiving and Christmas and said if there is any way to minimize business impact during the holiday season it should be done.

Mr. Joe Sparks, owner of Legend's Restaurant, said he has heard incentives could be anywhere from \$2 million to \$5 million and Ms. Mathuranayagam said that has been discussed, but that depends on how much federal money is available and how well the project proceeds. Mr. O'Leary said the City had advertised up to \$1 million in incentives, but that has decreased to cover increased costs of the project.

Ms. Mathuranayagam said there will be a lot of dust and noise associated with the construction and highlighted control measures. She said best practices for dust control include watering surfaces repeatedly until wet, but not so much to create runoff. She said there could be mulch application to protect exposed soil from wind and water erosion, seeding, and/or use of construction site erosion control mats (sod). She said a combination of measures can be used. In the case of noise, she said the City has the authority to restrict the times of day for operations and use of pneumatic impact equipment that is very noisy. She said that type of equipment may be restricted to day time hours only. She said there will also be restrictions on the use of jackhammers and pavement breakers and the contractor will have to use quieter alternate equipment with maximum noise muffling capacity. She said there will also be assigned "dirt haul routes" the contractor will have to use to minimize dirt trucks traveling on residential streets and along Lindsey Street. She said, if approved, the contractor could pull power from a local grid to limit generator noise and pay the utility company accordingly.

Councilmember Griffith said if contractors are allowed to use the local electrical grid versus generators would that add significantly to their contract costs and Mr. O'Leary said no, it could even save them money. Ms. Mathuranayagam said electricity costs will depend on what the utility company charges the contractor, which the City has no control over.

Councilmember Griffith asked if there would be restrictions on working at night if there is not a lot of noise that could interfere with sleep patterns and Ms. Mathuranayagam said that depends on how the contract is written, but that could be done on a case by case basis. Councilmember Griffith felt contractors should have every opportunity to complete the work as quickly as possible to earn incentives and Mr. O'Leary said one of the great challenges of writing construction contracts is writing contractual language that is specific, clear, and in the City's best interest, but at the same time leaving language open enough to allow the skills and abilities of private contractors to be maximized. He said the City wants the contractors to be creative and do their job without a lot of hindrance.

Helping Businesses During Construction, continued:

Ms. Joy Hampton, The Norman Transcript, said the water application for dust control could be a moving target because the City is discussing what types of water (potable/non-potable) can be used for construction situations especially if the City enters into a drought period during a project that is expected to take a year and a half to complete. She asked if there are other methods that could be used besides water and Ms. Mathuranayagam said yes, mulch, vegetation, erosion control mats, etc. Ms. Hampton asked if the water would come from hydrants or be trucked in and Mr. O'Leary said water trucks will probably be used and there would typically be a hydrant meter serving the water truck within the corridor. He said this will all be factored into Council's discussion on bulk water use.

Councilmember Castleberry asked if the City has a contract yet and Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said no, the City does not even have the project plans yet. Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said the contract will be a joint contract between the City of Norman and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), but what is being discussed today are provisions that could be placed in that contract. He said it will probably be July 2015, before bids are let.

Mr. O'Leary said seven private and public utility companies will be moving their lines through private contractors and although the City has a franchise agreement with the utility companies to use the rights-of-way, the City has no control over the contractors doing the work. Councilmember Castleberry asked if the utility companies pay for the relocation or if the City pays and Mr. O'Leary said the utility companies pay for the relocation and that is why they like to control their own destiny. He said since the City does not control those contracts, it is very challenging for the City to ensure those contractors follow the guidelines discussed today as far as dust and noise control, hours of operation, etc. Councilmember Castleberry asked if there would be lane closures during the utility relocation and Mr. O'Leary said there may possibly be temporary closures, but not permanent. Mr. Joe Sparks, Legend's Restaurant, said he heard utility relocation was supposed to begin January 2014, and Ms. Mathuranayagam said currently the target date is June, but that date has been a moving target due to other challenges and delays.

Councilmember Griffith asked if the construction budget is still in alignment or beginning to increase and Mr. O'Leary said it is increasing. He said there has recently been a really challenging utility issue that could be an unexpected big ticket item and Staff is working to solve the problem. He said it is a daily process but Staff's direction is clear and they will bring the project within or under budget.

Public/Business Information Strategies and Temporary Directional Signage

Mr. Floyd discussed the public and business information strategies that will be used for the project. He said there will be increased focus on the project, stakeholder and public information during the project. He said potential methods to increase information dissemination and receive feedback from the public and stakeholders include face-to-face meetings with Public Works Project Construction Managers (PW Project Managers); press releases; the City's website using a dedicated webpage; social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook; Blackboard Connect; and development of an informational guide for businesses impacted by construction. He said there will also be enhanced efforts by Staff to relay information and create dialogue with both the public and businesses impacted by the construction.

Mr. Floyd said PW Project Managers will meet with businesses in advance of construction to discuss construction on-site with tenants and/or property owners. Input and feedback from these on-site meetings can be used to develop smaller mitigation measures (e.g., temporary driveway placement, primary customer entrance routes) for each business. He said PW Project Managers can help businesses establish contacts/rapport with City Staff involved in the project. Press releases can be used in conjunction with other informational strategies to update the media and public on project updates.

Public/Business Information Strategies and Temporary Directional Signage, continued:

Mr. Floyd said the City's website will have a dedicated webpage that can be easily accessed on the City's homepage. He said the current Lindsey Street Project webpage includes meeting notices with agendas, current meeting presentations, a Lindsey Street video, and project status update. He said the webpage can be expanded to include weekly project updates; time sensitive information; reference information outlined in press releases/social media updates; maps, presentations, graphics, other downloadable material; and other pertinent information such as contact information, etc. Councilmember Castleberry liked the idea of having a "hub" for information on the City's website. Councilmember Griffith urged Staff to make sure the link to the project on the homepage is very prominent.

Mr. Floyd said the City will establish a separate Facebook page and Twitter account dedicated to Lindsey Street Project updates. He said citizens and stakeholders will be encouraged to follow/"like" social media sites to receive updates and there will be a source to receive citizen feedback as well as distribute information. He said social media can be used to direct users to the webpage for additional information and materials and followers can remain aware of project updates more quickly than updating solely through a webpage, particularly in the cases of lane closures/detour routes.

Mr. Floyd said Blackboard Connect is a mass notification system that can send messages pinpointed to people directly affected by an event. He said citizens and stakeholders will be encouraged to sign up when the program is activated. Updates can be received via email, home phone, business phone, registered cell phone, and text. Specific groups can be created by a contact list or within a geographic region of the project to receive customized updates and general project messages can be distributed to notify all users of major long-term construction impacts.

Mr. Floyd said the informational guide will consist of strategies that have been implemented by other cities to provide information, suggestions, and general mitigation measures that businesses can employ during major construction projects. The informational guide can include contact information for project managers or other sources, suggestions for business strategies before, during, and after construction, ways to maintain rapport with project managers and construction crews, and additional helpful resources for information.

Mr. Floyd said temporary directional signage will be placed to assist motorists in finding retail, restaurant and hospitality locations on the east and west side of Lindsey Street during interchanges/street improvement projects; however, signage will not direct the public to individual businesses. The temporary signage will be similar to the signage used during the Main Street Interchange Project and is a partnership between the City of Norman and NCVB. The Signage Plan will be developed upon finalization of the Lindsey Street Plan and sign construction and installation will be done in-house to be completed to coincide with the opening of detour routes and project construction. Mr. Sparks asked if the signage will also be on I-35 and Mr. Sturtz said yes, there will be large directional signs as part of ODOT's construction package.

Councilmember Castleberry said although this project affects everyone, each business on Lindsey Street has a different interest in the timeline of the project and needs more than a one day notice of construction.

Mr. O'Leary said ODOT is accepting bids for Phase II: Highway 9 and Lindsey Street Project in September 2014, and will finish Highway 9 before they begin on the Lindsey Street Bridge Project. Councilmember Castleberry asked how long the bridge would be under construction and Mr. O'Leary said he was not sure, but it could be nine months.

Public/Business Information Strategies and Temporary Directional Signage, continued:

Items submitted for the record

1. Memorandum dated April 24, 2014, from Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator, through Steve Lewis, City Manager, to Council Business and Community Affairs Committee
2. PowerPoint entitled, "Helping Businesses During Construction – Lindsey Street – 24th Avenue SW to East of Berry Road," by Leidos Engineering May 2, 2014
3. PowerPoint entitled, "Public/Business Information Strategies & Temporary Construction Directional Signage for the Lindsey Street Project," Council Business and Community Affairs Committee, May 2, 2014

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Item 2, being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION.

None

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The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.